



A Strategic Vision for TechHelp 2007-2009

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Our Mission

To provide professional and technical assistance, training and information to strengthen the competitiveness of Idaho manufacturers and targeted service firms through continuous product and process innovation.

Our Vision

Accessible Organization - TechHelp will be an accessible organization with effective communication flowing to and from its manufacturing customers, partners and employees. TechHelp will also be a learning organization that provides its stakeholders with value-added and mutually beneficial solutions that drive business and personal growth.

Customer Satisfaction - TechHelp will be in the vocabulary of all Idaho manufacturers because of its reputation for business relationships based on long-term commitment, trust, tangible results and putting company interests first. TechHelp will further enhance customer satisfaction by helping businesses transform their operations while helping them become self-sufficient in managing the change.

Statewide Impact - TechHelp will be seen as a public investment that pays for itself through significant returns to businesses, stakeholders and the state economy. Idaho's leaders will be aware of TechHelp's specific contribution to the state economy, including higher productivity and wages, an increased tax base, quality jobs for Idaho graduates, growth in rural areas and improvements to the environment.

Our Core Values – PRI⁴

Performance - We will produce bottom-line results by helping Idaho manufacturers become more productive and competitive through continual product and process innovation. We will ensure a positive return from the public investment in TechHelp.

Responsiveness - We will deliver services that are responsive to the needs of Idaho manufacturers and are based on the evolving performance standards for industrial competitiveness. We will focus on companies that demonstrate a commitment to investing in their own growth and development.

Individual - We will demonstrate that people are our most important asset by recognizing accomplishment, establishing clear roles and responsibilities and offering professional advancement. We will value the dignity of the individual and will respect the actions that businesses have already undertaken.

Integration - We will follow a holistic approach and recognize that management, financial and technical issues are closely intertwined. We will be a reliable and credible partner in providing business assistance as part of the Idaho economic development team.

Innovation – Innovation is at the core of all that we do. We will deliver unique, innovative and quality services that help Idaho companies become more competitive through continual product and process innovation. We will seek continuous evaluation and improvement of those services to ensure we generate positive impact for our customers.

Integrity - We are committed to operating in an ethical, effective and efficient manner and will always apply best practices and professionalism in our work. Our work reflects our values.

TechHelp Goals and Objectives

Goals/Objectives	Description	Alignment with SBOE Goals & Objectives			
		Quality	Access	Relevancy	Efficiency
Goal One: Impact on Manufacturing					
Deliver a positive return on both private business investments and public investments in TechHelp by adding value to the customer and the community.					
Short Term Objectives:				X	
1	Establish new business services to help businesses grow.				
a.	Establish a marketing Community of Practice (CoP) consisting of partners that will help TechHelp clients market more effectively.			X	
i.	Marketing focus will include market research, make or buy decisions, pricing, promotion, distribution, intellectual property, importing and exporting, outsourcing issues and image management.			X	
ii.	Marketing CoP partners will include the university resources, ISBDC, national MEP resources, Idaho Department of Agriculture, Idaho Commerce & Labor and professional third party service providers.		X		X
b.	Expand TechHelp's partnership with the Idaho Business Network and develop additional cross marketing activities.			X	
2	Develop a methodology to build relationships with new and relocating companies.		X		
a.	Develop an agreement with Idaho Commerce and Labor to share contact information of relocating companies.		X		
b.	Stay abreast of economic changes and activity in Idaho communities.		X		
c.	Provide TechHelp information to new and relocating companies.		X		
d.	Provide TechHelp information to chambers of commerce, economic development groups and the Idaho Economic Development Association.		X		
e.	Develop a methodology for TechHelp staff to add information for new and relocating companies to the TechHelp database.		X		
f.	Assign a TechHelp specialist to follow up with new and relocating companies.		X		
3	Develop and deliver new TechHelp products and workshops.				
a.	Offer Lean Office to past and targeted new clients and continue to assess market potential for this product.		X	X	

b.	Continue to develop and offer the Lean Enterprise Certificate Program.			X	
c.	Develop and publish an annual workshop schedule.		X		
d.	Encourage manufacturing specialists to actively listen for training opportunities and report them to the TechHelp training lead.			X	
e.	Coordinate with Washington Manufacturing Services (WMS) on joint workshops and schedules.		X		X
f.	Determine market potential for Lean Health Care and Lean Government.			X	
g.	Explore the feasibility of creating partnerships to nurture Idaho business clusters. Partnership clusters for growing Idaho industries can improve the competitive position of partners through cooperative action.			X	X
h.	Explore opportunities within the Northwest Food Processors cluster.			X	X
i.	Stay abreast of what sister MEP centers are doing in this area.			X	
j.	Identify lead practitioners within the TechHelp staff who will scout advances in services and report to the team.			X	
4	Meet MEP System goals.	X	X	X	X
a.	Participate in or develop a project with at least one NIST national account each year.				
b.	Pursue a funding opportunity with a NIST MEP strategic partner.				
c.	Complete at least one product innovation project per year.				
Goal Two: Market Penetration					
Ensure that a significant share of Idaho manufacturers use TechHelp services.					
Short Term Objectives:					
1	Develop a clear marketing message with concise talking points.	X			
a.	Inform Idaho manufacturers of TechHelp technical assistance, training and public policy and education services.		X		
b.	Articulate TechHelp's value proposition.				
c.	Articulate TechHelp's role as an integral member of Idaho's economic development team.				
d.	Communicate TechHelp's strategy to nurture entrepreneurial activity within existing businesses.				
2	Increase communication activities of TechHelp manufacturing specialists.		X		
a.	Work with TechHelp specialists to develop and deliver the TechHelp marketing message.		X		

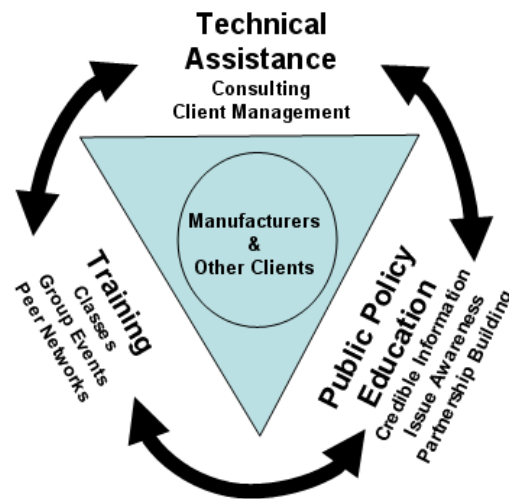
b.	Customize the TechHelp electronic newsletter and distribute it to clients from individual manufacturing specialists in order to improve specialist name recognition and networking opportunities.		X		
c.	Continue to build and groom the TechHelp database in order to accurately target TechHelp marketing materials to customers and stakeholders.		X		
d.	Create a semi annual printed version of the TechHelp newsletter that specialists and staff will distribute to clients and stakeholders.		X		
3	Target TechHelp services to "Top 200" Idaho prospects.		X		
a.	Identify "Top 200" prospects and deliver marketing materials in order to build awareness of TechHelp products, services and staff.		X		
b.	Develop a forward-looking client needs survey in order to anticipate future needs and to build awareness of new TechHelp products.		X	X	
c.	Engage TechHelp Advisory Board members in outreach activities with top prospects.		X		
4	Market key TechHelp products and services.		X		
a.	Develop a new "Enterprise Assessment" tool that specialists can use to develop and broaden consulting relationships with clients.		X	X	
b.	Continue to publish and distribute TechHelp success stories and explore ways to maximize their effectiveness.				
c.	Present TechHelp "Spirit of Continuous Innovation" award to successful clients at local events. Invite TechHelp Board Members, media, legislators, potential clients and other stakeholders in order to highlight the positive results of TechHelp engagements.				
d.	Engage TechHelp Board Members in local marketing efforts.		X		X
e.	Cross-market TechHelp services in cooperation with partner agencies and stakeholders.		X		X
5	Evaluate demand for and consider hosting an Idaho Manufacturing & Innovation Conference every other year (odd numbered years).			X	
a.	In October of even numbered years, consult with the potential sponsors, the TechHelp team, the TechHelp Advisory Board, university partners and other economic and legislative stakeholders to determine the interest in hosting a manufacturing & innovation conference the following October.			X	
b.	If there is sufficient interest, as determined by TechHelp's Executive Director, engage partners and begin planning for the conference.				
Goal Three: Financial Health					

Increase the amount of program revenue and the level of external funding to assure the fiscal health of TechHelp.					
Short Term Objectives:					
1	Seek additional recurring state funding to solidify TechHelp's ability to provide services statewide and to provide solid match for other funding opportunities.				
a.	Use private sector members of Advisory Board to help communicate TechHelp's message to key legislators, administrators and policymakers.				
b.	Develop a clear position on manufacturing outsourcing. Explain why it is important to assist in new product development even if some manufacturing functions are outsourced.				
c.	Explore the use of an external policy advocate to help communicate the TechHelp message to the Idaho Legislature.				
2	Seek additional funding to support the New Product Development program.				
3	Develop and deliver new TechHelp products and services that will drive increased client revenue.				
4	Improve the clarity of TechHelp's role and relationships with other Idaho business development organizations.				X
a.	Hold joint meeting with TechConnect, TECenter, Idaho Commerce & Labor Division of Science and Technology and ISBDC to clarify roles, understand interests and develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).				X
i.	Differentiate between technology transfer & commercialization and new product development and determine organizational roles and responsibilities.				X
ii.	Determine how each organization supports and works with entrepreneurs.				X
iii.	Work with partners to develop referral protocols that create a "No Wrong Door" network that ensures Idaho businesses will always be guided to the help they need.		X		X
iv.	Explore ways that Idaho economic development agencies can cooperate and communicate as an Idaho Team in order to clarify agency branding and roles.		X		X
b.	Hold joint meetings with university hosts to establish clear channels of communication and recommitment to MOA.				X
c.	Meet with Idaho community colleges and other educational institutions to articulate TechHelp's role and to seek common interests.		X		X

Goal Four: Customer Satisfaction					
Create satisfied customers who make referrals to TechHelp and become repeat customers.					
Short Term Objectives:					
1	Continually assess TechHelp business practices for efficiency and effectiveness.				X
2	Educate clients on the importance of the TechHelp survey process. Explain how it serves their interests to connect investments with measured outcomes.	X		X	
3	Continually improve the quality of TechHelp services.	X			
4	Increase cross marketing between TechHelp's technical assistance and training functions.				X
Goal Five: Capacity Utilization and Operational Efficiency					
Make efficient and effective use of TechHelp staff, systems and Board members.					
Short Term Objectives:					
1	Develop training plans for TechHelp specialists and staff.				
a.	Provide professional development training to manufacturing specialists in the areas of client management, sales and marketing.				
2	Improve TechHelp information systems.	X			X
3	Make greater use of the MEP Community of Practice (CoP).				
4	Standardize TechHelp third party contractor process and practice.	X			X
a.	Work with TechHelp specialists and staff to develop, train and engage a network of trusted third party service providers.	X			X
b.	Evaluate third party providers annually for availability, effectiveness and their interest in continuing the relationship.				
c.	Ensure that TechHelp and client evaluations of third party contractors are included in the TechHelp database.				
5	Engage TechHelp Advisory Board members more effectively for marketing and fundraising activities and in developing new TechHelp products and services.			X	X
Goal Six: Employee Satisfaction					
Provide a work environment at TechHelp that encourages life-long learning and personal development.					
Short Term Objectives:					
1	Improve performance management system.	X			X
a.	Build an organizational culture of positive recognition.	X			
b.	Develop an orientation and mentoring process for new employees.	X			

c.	Arrange for top TechHelp managers to job shadow manufacturing specialists.	X			
2	Improve TechTrak software and procedures in order to create efficiency and minimize reporting requirements of manufacturing specialists.	X			
3	Create a professional development plan for each employee.	X			
4	Seek employee compensation increases that exceed the rate of inflation.				
a.	Use competency-based pay banding as a way to reward higher performance with higher pay.				
b.	To provide adequate compensation and motivation for new manufacturing specialists, TechHelp will offer the option of participating in a group incentive plan during the initial year of employment. The group plan would provide performance incentives based on the overall success of TechHelp. New specialists may choose to participate in the individual plan if it better meets their needs.				

TechHelp Operating Platform



TechHelp's Operating Platform is represented by a three legged stool comprised of technical assistance, training and public policy and education. TechHelp's primary mission is to help Idaho manufacturers, processors and inventors become more globally competitive through continuous product and processes innovation. TechHelp specialists, associated with Idaho universities, are available for consultation statewide.

TechHelp consulting work begins when a TechHelp manufacturing specialist initiates a direct relationship with executives at an Idaho firm. TechHelp specialists contract with Idaho manufacturers to complete specific projects within an enterprise framework. In some cases, TechHelp may engage the services of third party contractors to meet the needs of a firm. TechHelp maintains relationships with other public service providers and makes referrals as appropriate. TechHelp technical assistance generates project fees that contribute a significant portion of TechHelp operating revenue.

TechHelp also provides training to meet the needs of its clients. TechHelp tailors on-site workshops to meet the specific needs of clients. Public workshops address topics of interest to manufacturers in general. Relationships developed during public events often lead to direct consulting work.

TechHelp administrators educate policymakers and stakeholders about manufacturing issues and ways to improve the competitiveness of Idaho manufacturers. TechHelp works hard to be a valued member of Idaho's economic development team. TechHelp managers seek to develop relationships and partnerships with stakeholders that will generate external streams of revenue to support efforts to aid Idaho manufacturers.

TechHelp Value Proposition to Clients

- Focused on improving the competitiveness of Idaho manufacturers and on creating jobs
- Solves business problems by providing linkage between university expertise and manufacturers
- Gives Idaho manufacturers access to a national system of manufacturing specialists with deep technical resources
- Provides a connection to policy discussions at state and national levels on issues relevant to manufacturers

TechHelp Product & Service Referral Table

	Product Development	Business Finance & Management	Quality Management	Process Improvement	Human Performance	Sales/Marketing
TechHelp	New Product Lab Development		Quality programs	Food Processing	Workforce Development Training	Gov Contracting Assistance
	Product Planning		ISO 9000	Lean Enterprise		
	Product Design			Manufacturing		
	Prototyping & Testing			Food		
	Manufacturing & Marketing			Food/ESL		
				Wood		
				Office		
				Health Care		
Third Party	Product Packaging	Strategic Planning	Six Sigma Belt Certification	Wood Processing	Executive Coaching	Industrial Marketing
	Intellectual Property Issues	Information Technology	Wastewater Management	Energy Assessment	Organizational Development	
					Recruitment & Selection	
					Safety	
					Supervisory training	
Referral to Other Agency	Patent Development - Tech Connect	SBDC			Workforce Development Training - Community Colleges	Market Research- Idaho Dept of Agriculture, SBDC
	SBIR - Tech Connect & Commerce & Labor	EDDs			Community Colleges	Export Assistance – Idaho Dept. of Ag, Commercial Service, Idaho Export Council, C&L
		Certified Dev Corps				
		SBA				

Strategic Issues in 2007

The TechHelp Team identified several key issues that need to be addressed as TechHelp moves forward:

1. **Expand TechHelp markets and/or customer base** – Technology has blurred the line between manufacturing and services, as functions are separated, streamlined and sometimes contracted to outside firms. Some TechHelp products, like LEAN, can be applied to office or health care systems. TechHelp's core business seems to be technology transfer and the streamlining of business systems, regardless of whether the product is a good or service.
2. **Improve partner relationships and clarify roles** – There are a large number of institutional players with overlapping missions operating in the areas of technology transfer, technology commercialization and small business support. In addition, TechHelp spans three universities and operates in an environment that includes community colleges. TechHelp will work closely with its economic development partners to create a "No Wrong Door" network that routes Idaho businesses to the most appropriate service provider.
3. **Brand TechHelp** – Amid the growing number of agency players clamoring for recognition and attention, TechHelp must balance its need to be visible and to gain recognition with its desire to be a team player within the Idaho economic development community.
4. **Build the TechHelp Team** – TechHelp's manufacturing specialists balance client management activities with direct technical assistance customers. In addition, staff members need to appreciate the connections between the primary function of technical assistance, and the training and public policy education support functions. Recent staff turnover indicates a need to nurture new employees into TechHelp's complex operating culture.
5. **Stay ahead of TechHelp's customers** – TechHelp needs to stay focused on delivering its products to all market segments and to continually develop new products. Issues such as outsourcing, business clusters and the need for workforce training to utilize new technologies create new opportunities for TechHelp to be of service.